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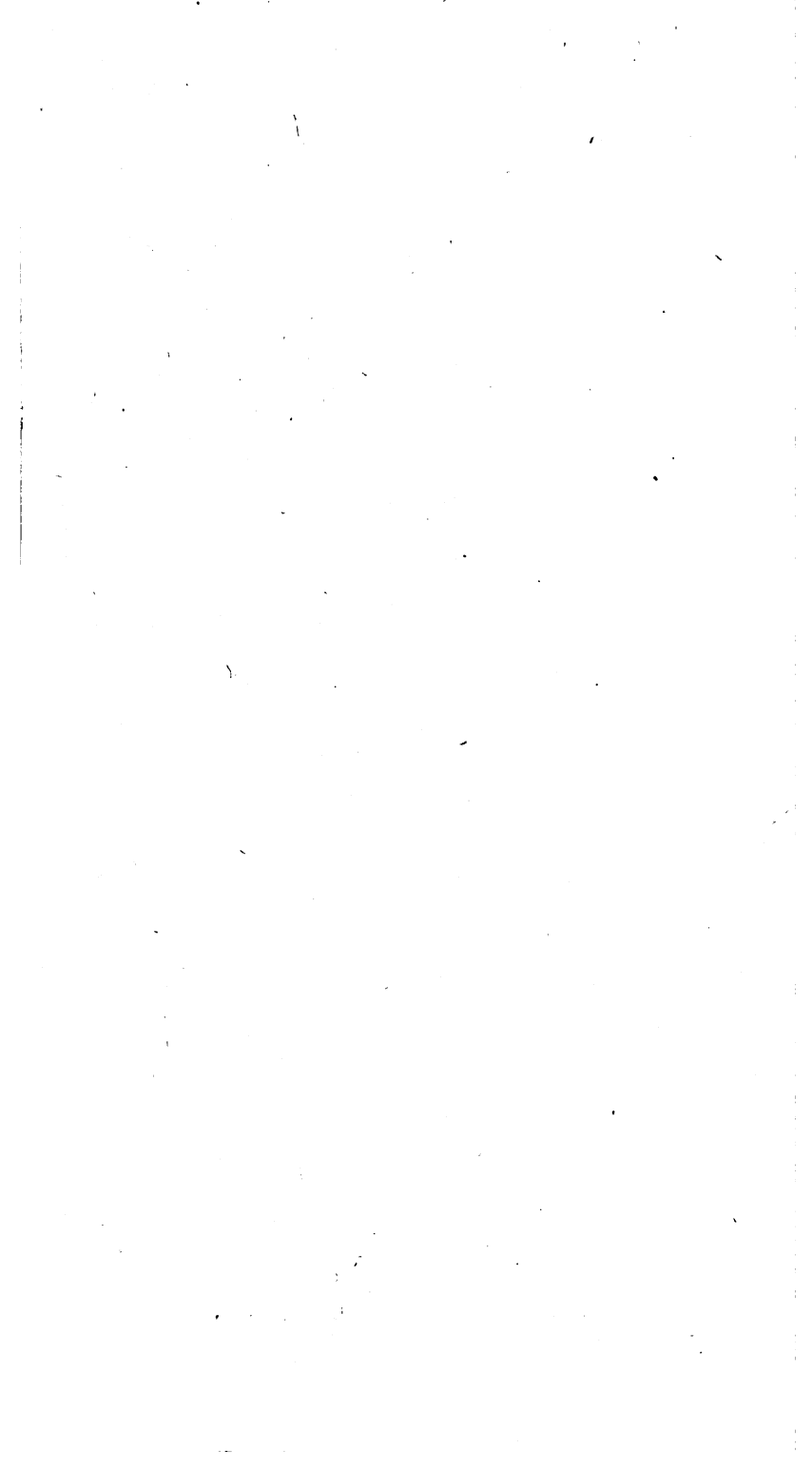


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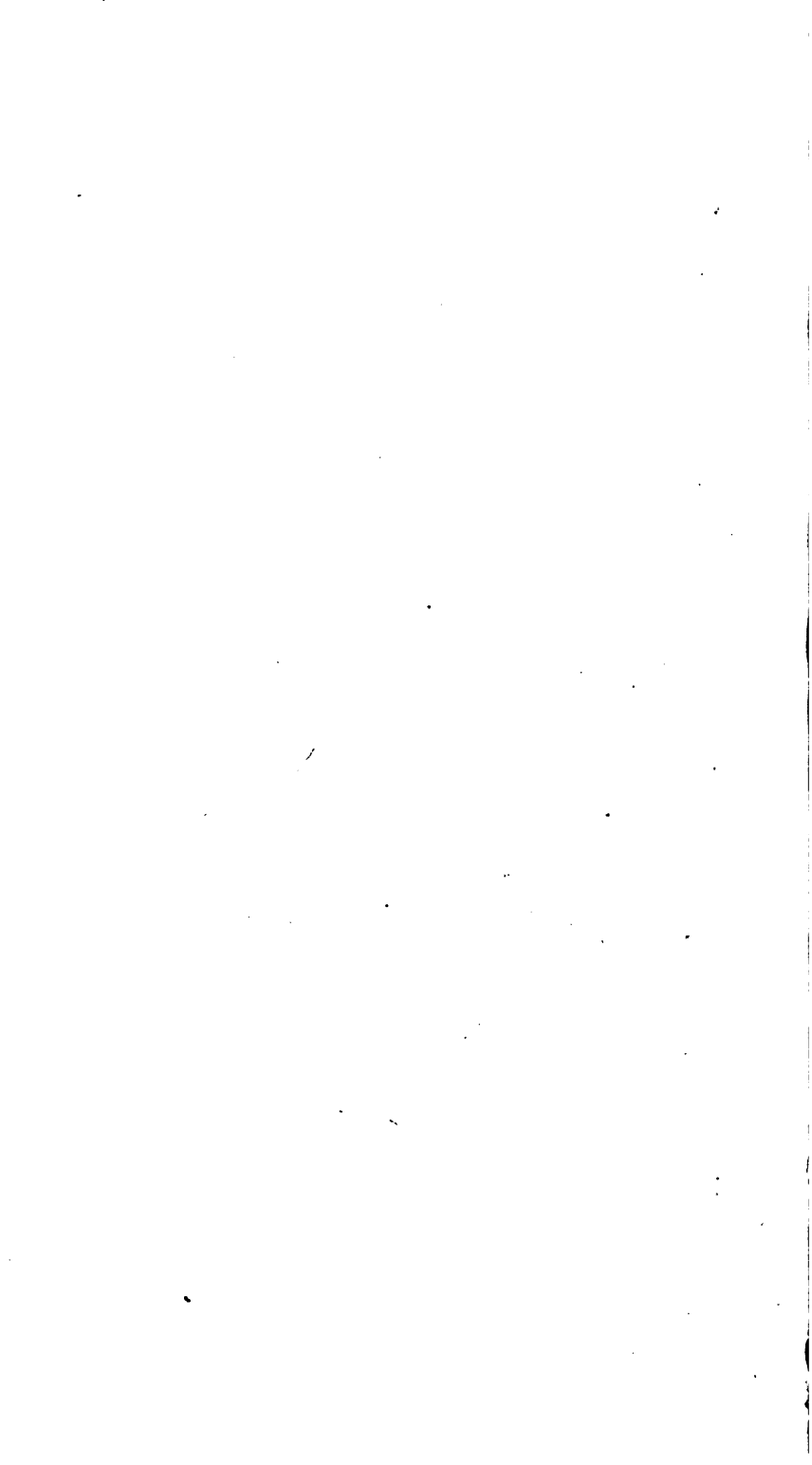
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H E L P S

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R I G H T D E C I S I O N

U P O N T H E

M E R I T S

O F T H E L A T E

Treaty of Commerce with France,

A D D R E S S E D T O T H E

Members of both Houses of Parliament.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLING-
TON-HOUSE, IN PICCADILLY.

M DCC LXXXVII.

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Treaty of Commerce with France.

THAT a Treaty of Commerce with France should create a general alarm in this country, is not to be wondered at, when it is considered, that none has ever had effect between the two Nations: The Marine Treaties concluded by Elizabeth in 1559 and 1564, and by Charles the second in 1677, containing no tariff or stipulations respecting the importation of merchandize into either kingdom from the other; all

their commercial provisions being confined to the security of the trading ships and traders' property: On the contrary, we find that in the year 1678, the House of Commons came to a resolution, *that the trade of France was detrimental to the kingdom*, and passed an Act in consequence, prohibiting the importation into England of all French commodities whatsoever for three years, and to the end of the then next Session of Parliament; and no Session having been held during the remainder of Charles's reign, the prohibition continued of course until the accession of James the second, who procured the repeal of the Prohibitory Act in 1685. But the renewal of the prohibition was one of the first consequences of the Revolution in 1688.

Ten years after, viz. in 1698, an attempt was made to frame a Marine Treaty between the two Crowns, and an agent was sent over by Colbert to London for the purpose, but he returned without accomplishing the object of his mission; and the Commercial Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, it is well known
having

having been in part disapproved by the House of Commons, was never carried into execution; and not having been mentioned in the subsequent Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, became abrogated; for it is a maxim of the law of nations, that all Treaties are suspended by war, and if not renewed by name in the subsequent Treaty of Peace, are to be considered as null and void.

When the Peace of Paris was negotiating, I remember to have heard it said, that the Duke of Bedford and the Duc de Choiseul, had some conversation respecting a Treaty of Commerce: The Duc de Choiseul proposed to renew the Treaty of 1713, *in toto*; and the Duke of Bedford proposed to leave out the 8th and 9th articles; but as neither would agree to the other's proposal, the matter dropt; and although both Nations may be said to have before and since acted towards each other, in many respects conformable to the other parts of the Treaty of 1713, yet the Treaty itself has never been allowed to be binding upon either.

From

From this short sketch of the history of our Commercial Treaties, or rather negotiations with France, these important questions naturally occur, viz. If it has not hitherto been judged wise or necessary, to have a Treaty of Commerce with France, how has it become wise and necessary to have one now? and is the present Treaty so essentially different, and the state of the Nations' Commerce so greatly altered, that the present Treaty ought to be approved by Parliament, although that of 1713, was justly reprobated?

To assist the Members of both Houses of Parliament in forming their opinion of the answers which ought to be given to these two questions is the object of this undertaking; and although, neither employed by, or connected with Ministry or Opposition, I have been impelled by a high sense of duty and affection to his Majesty, and zeal for the prosperity of my Country, impartially to offer to their consideration, upon a business of such vast importance, the result of much experience in public affairs, and a long acquaint-

acquaintance with the commercial interests of the nation ; for it is now full thirty years since I was first sworn a servant of the crown.

It is indeed a matter too essential to the general welfare to be treated as a subject for party discussion, and I cannot but applaud the candor and wisdom of the Minister in proroguing both Houses of Parliament after the Treaty was concluded, and thereby giving time for its due consideration before their approbation of it was asked for.

As no proper answer can be given to the questions I have propounded, without a general knowledge of the progress of the trade of England, it is necessary to take a brief review of it for two centuries back, and especially of that part of it which was carried on between us and France.

I have never met with any tolerably exact estimate of the total value of the exports from England in the reign of Elizabeth, but it must have been considerable, if we
give

give credit to what Guicciardini says of the value of the imports from England into the Netherlands, in the beginning of her reign. The Woollen Drapery alone he estimates at a million, and the Wool and other merchandize, at about £. 1,400,000 more. Camden however does not estimate our exports to the Netherlands in 1564, at above half the sum; and of that he says, the Woollen Drapery made only £. 500,000.

Much of this was again re-exported to other countries, with whom England had then little or no direct trade; and as with Calais we had lost our staple there, France also got her supply of English Woollens through the Netherlands.

That the balance of trade was then in our favour, and increased considerably during Elizabeth's reign, may be collected from the circumstance of her Council's allowing Wheat to be exported, when it was sold at 10s. per quarter instead of 6s. 8d. which is a proof of the greater plenty of money; and from the statute for increasing the
number

number of Sheriffs, giving as the reason for doing so, that there were then more gentlemen of good ability to serve the office than had been formerly : But the Duke D'Alva's persecution in the Netherlands, and Louis the IXth in France, by forcing so many manufacturers to take refuge in England, could not fail to add greatly to the national stock ; and by reducing the imports and encreasing the exports, occasion an influx of wealth into the kingdom ; and accordingly we find *Wheeler* in his *Treatise of Commerce*, asserting that in the year 1600, the Company of Merchant Adventurers only, did export to the value of a million in Woollen Cloths, part of which were of the kind called *new drapery* ; the distinguishing appellation of the light cloths made by the refugees, and which is the more probable, as the insurrection of the Moors in Grenada, by putting a stop to the Woollen Manufactures in that country, must have served to increase the foreign demand for ours.

This increase of demand seems however to have produced carelessness in our manufacturers,

facturers, for we find King James issuing a commission in 1622, to several lords and gentlemen, to inquire into the cause of the decay of trade, and particularly of the *loss of estimation and vent of English Woollen Cloths in foreign parts*; and the author of the *Circle of Commerce* makes a ballance of no less than 298,870 l. against the nation in that year; this however, cannot be allowed to be a correct account; if we attend to the before-mentioned circumstances, and to what Sir Josiah Child asserts in his discourse upon trade, that in the year 1635, only thirteen years afterwards, there were more Merchants to be found on the Exchange of London worth 1000 l. each, than there were in 1600 worth one hundred; and we find that Wheat was allowed to be exported in 1624, when the price did not exceed 1l. 12s. per quarter; whereas in 1603, the exporting price was limited to 1l. 6s. 8d. which certainly implies an increase of money. I should likewise have mentioned the reduction of the rate of interest from 10 to 8 per cent. which took place in 1624, as another proof of the increase of money; did not the
the

the statute which reduced it, give as a reason for doing so, that *the value of lands and of other commodities of England were much abated*; which circumstances, if true, must have tended to raise the natural interest of money, and would now be thought a very extraordinary reason for reducing the legal interest, which according to the present prevailing opinions, ought never to be lower than the natural.

To this compulsive reduction however, Sir Josiah Child chiefly imputes the wealth acquired by the English Merchants, and the rise of lands in the ten following years, and it seems the measure was deemed so beneficial, that in 1651, a further reduction from 8 to 6 per cent. was made by Act of Parliament, and the statute of 1714, which reduces it from 6 to 5 per cent. asserts in the preamble, that *the former reductions had been found by experience very beneficial to the advancement of trade and improvement of lands*: How it has happened that no further reduction has since been made, is certainly worth enquiring; for although it should not

be admitted, notwithstanding the instances I have given, that the reduction of the legal interest below the natural, would be beneficial to the nation ; yet there can be no good reason assigned for keeping up the legal greatly above the natural, which was the case in 1752, when a large sum of the national debt was reduced to $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 per cent. by consent of the public creditors ; and the legal interest ought then to have been reduced to 4 per cent. for by keeping it up to 5 per cent. the merchants and manufacturers were obliged to pay at that rate for the discount of their inland bills and notes, to the great prejudice of our trade and hindrance of the increase of our national wealth ; for no commercial proposition is more evident, than that low interest will promote trade and increase manufactures ; as the manufacturer is thereby enabled to provide a larger stock of materials in the proper season ; the warehouse-man to give larger credit to the merchant, and the merchant to export greater quantities, and wait longer for his returns. But it was not for the private advantage of the two citizens, whom the

the Pelham's were guided by, in money matters, Sir John Bernard and Mr. Gideon, to reduce the then legal interest of money; and therefore it was not done: which ought to be a caution to all ministers, not to confide too much in merchants, or monied men; their information is greatly to be valued, but their advice is generally interested. Our present upright and able minister, and the navigation of England, had a happy escape from the dangerous effects of such influence in 1784, and the nation might possibly have saved some millions, if he had been wholly free from it in 1786. I trust however, he will speedily compensate to the public for the exorbitant gain individuals have been allowed to make through the rise of the funds, by availing himself of that circumstance to reduce the legal interest to a par with what they now produce *. But I must

* Had the never to be sufficiently regretted great Minister who presided at the Treasury from April 1763 to July 1765, remained in office, he would have reduced the legal interest to 4 per cent. as soon as he had disposed of the unfunded debt; and he had taken an important step towards it, by issuing Exchequer Bills at an interest of only 3 per cent. and bringing the Bank into an agreement to circulate them at that rate.

return

return to observe further, upon the reports of the ballance of our foreign trade, which was said to have been near 300,000 l. against the nation, when the first reduction of legal interest took place in 1624; and from *Davenant's* account, it would appear to have been continually augmenting against us; for he says it had risen in 1662, to near two millions, and the *British Merchant* makes it amount to 2,132,864 l. in 1668.

The respect due to such great authorities as Sir J. Davenant, and Mr. Martin; Inspector-general of the Customs in 1713, and author of the *British Merchant*, would incline me implicitly to adopt their statements, if they did not carry upon the face of them strong evidence of their fallacy.

The whole amount of the circulating specie of the kingdom, was at this time less than six millions, as Sir William Petty calculates; and as we have no gold or silver mines of our own, the only possible means by which we can obtain or retain specie money, are from the ballance of our foreign trade

trade being in our favour, or by loans from foreigners: The latter means was not then in use, and if the ballance of our foreign trade had been continually increasing against us from 1622, and had risen to 2,132,864 l. in 1668, there could not have remained any circulating specie in the kingdom; nay, it is evident to a demonstration, that if a balance of two millions per ann. had been against the nation for only the last six years, viz. from 1662 to 1668, *twelve millions* of specie would have been required to discharge it; which was double the amount of all our circulating gold and silver; and consequently specie money would have been as scarce in England, as it is now in some of the American States, from similar causes.

But there are other circumstances from which the fallacy of these statements may be collected: Our Woollen, Leather, Iron, and Silk Manufactures had flourished greatly during those forty-six years, insomuch that it was found necessary to prohibit the exportation of raw or tanned hides in 1630, and of Wool in 1660; and the Silk
Throwsters

Throwsters Company employed 40,000 persons in London in the latter year. The price of Wheat which in 1622 was only 1l. 3s. the quarter, was prohibited to be exported in 1632, and we find it at 2l. 8s. in 1646, and much above that price for six years after; and in the year 1660, it was allowed to be exported, when it did not exceed 2l. Beef was also then allowed to be exported at 5l. per barrel, Pork at 6l. and Butter at 4l. 10s. and in the year 1623, Wheat was permitted to be exported at 2l. 8s. per quarter; and Lands which had sold for twelve years purchase in 1622, had also risen in proportion, for we find them at fifteen years purchase in 1672; and in the preamble to the commission of the Council of Trade in that year, it is asserted, *that the trade and wealth of the subjects, both at home and abroad, were much increased.* All which facts are indisputable proofs of the increase of money and national prosperity. The tonage of our merchant ships must also have been increasing during that period, as Davenant says, it amounted in 1687, to double what it was in 1666.

Having

Having thus proved the fallacy of these statements, it may be proper to suggest some reasons for their being so erroneous:— And first, it appears to have been the practice in those times, to add to the rated value of both exports and imports, the customs or duties charged upon them: Now although the customs or duties paid by any commodity exported, enter into its price, and make a part of its charge to the foreign purchaser, and consequently the whole amount is to be placed to the nation's credit; yet the customs or duties paid *here* upon imported commodities, are by no means to be added to their cost as a charge against the nation; because the money is not to be remitted to foreigners, and only enhances the price to the inhabitants of the country who consume the commodities. The whole amount therefore of the customs or duties upon imported commodities, is to be deducted from the estimate of our imports given by these writers. Another circumstance is also to be attended to, which is, that almost all our commodities were then subject to duties upon exportation;

therefore it became the interest of the exporter to smuggle outwards whenever he could find an opportunity of doing it, which in those days could not be difficult; and to enter as much under the real quantity exported as he could prevail on the Custom-House Officer to allow him to do.

The accounts being made up for single years, are for that reason also liable to great exception, for the long continuance of an adverse wind towards the end of the year, may have thrown a considerable part of what would otherwise have been included in its imports, into the next, and thus improperly augment the one and diminish the other.

But after all those allowances are made, much will remain to be placed to the account of the patriotic zeal of the writers themselves, or possibly to their partiality against France; for it is to our trade with that kingdom, the chief of our commercial grievances are imputed: And indeed, if the state of our trade with France, laid before

fore Parliament in 1675, be any thing near the truth, there was ample ground of complaint; for the exports to France are therein stated to amount to only £. 170,000, and our imports to £. 1,500,000: Now as the Tariff of 1664, had then been in force eleven years, if the smallness of our exports to France was supposed to be the effect of its operation, is it not surprizing that it was not sooner reſented? And is it not ſtill more extraordinary to find it referred to in the Treaty of 1713, and the renewal of it conſidered as a benefit to Great Britain? I have never ſeen that Tariff, and cannot therefore examine it; but I hope whoever is in poſſeſſion of a correct copy of it will give it to the public; as a compariſon of it, with that annexed to the late Treaty, muſt greatly aſſiſt Parliament in forming a judgment of the ſuperior advantage of the latter.

As however there was not in 1675, any Commercial Treaty ſubſiſting between the two kingdoms, the King and his Parliament were at liberty to chuſe their meaſures for redreſſing the grievance. But the Marine

Treaty of 1677, does not nevertheless make any stipulation in favour of English manufactures, or merchandize carried into France; and by leaving out several important articles which had hitherto been included in the list of counterband, rather aggravated than remedied the complaint; and accordingly the Parliament in the following year, came to the resolution I have already quoted, and passed an Act prohibiting the importation into England of all French commodities whatsoever.

The wisdom of this prohibition is highly celebrated by all our commercial writers; and the good effects attributed to it are so great, that if we give them full credit, we shall find in them, a further reason for suspecting the former estimate of the nation's loss by her foreign trade, to be a gross misrepresentation.

The ballance stated against the nation in 1668, we have already seen, is said to have been upwards of two millions, and of this £. 1,300,000, appears by the above account
to

to have been lost by our trade with France; the prohibition therefore of that trade, however rigorously enforced, could not do more than reduce the balance against us to £. 670,000; but when we examine the articles which were then usually imported from France, we shall find good reason to suppose most of them, or similar commodities, must have continued to be imported from other countries, after the prohibition of importing them from France took place; and consequently the reduction of the general balance could not be so considerably in our favour as their amount.

The following were the articles imported from France, and their estimated value before the prohibition in 1677.

	£.
Manufactured Silks, —	600,000
Linen, Sail Cloths, and Canvas, —	500,000
Cambrics, — —	200,000
Beaver Hats, Glafs, Watches and Clocks, — —	220,000
Carried over —	<hr/> 1,520,000
	Brought

		£.
Brought over,	—	1,520,000
Paper,	— —	90,000
Iron Ware,	— —	40,000
Shalloons, Tammies, &c.	—	150,000
Wines,	— —	200,000
Brandies,	— —	80,000
		<hr/>
		2,080,000

And when King James obtained the repeal of the Prohibitory Act in 1685, and the trade was laid open, and continued so until 1688; the medium of the imports from France in those three years, as extracted from the Custom-House Books, are stated by the *British Merchant* to have been as follows :

		£.
Linens including Cambrics,		700,000
Lutestrings and Alamodes,	—	212,500
Other Silk Fabrics,	—	500,000
Paper,	— — —	50,000
Wines,	— —	180,150
Brandy,	— — —	80,000
		<hr/>
		1,722,650
		Now

Now from the first of these accounts it appears, that the articles imported from France were such as we did not then make a sufficient quantity of for our own consumption, and that it was not likely we should do without them; and from the second account it is equally evident, that during the eight years of prohibition, we had not so much improved in either our Linen or Silk Manufactures, as to reduce the demand for those articles from foreigners; and consequently that the balance of our foreign trade had not been much lowered by the operation of the prohibitory Act, except in the articles of Iron Ware, Paper, Beaver Hats, Clocks, Watches and Shalloons. The last account indeed, shews the importation of Silks and Linens to have been larger in the last three years than it had been in the year preceding the prohibition; but a considerable allowance must be made for the eagerness of the French Merchants to avail themselves of the repeal, by throwing in great quantities of their manufactures while the trade continued open: But however large we make that

that allowance, the accounts I have quoted, must still be admitted as a full proof, that the ballance of two millions which was stated to be against us in 1668; and is not supposed to have been less in 1677; if it had really existed, could not have been so greatly reduced, by the operation of the Prohibitory Act of the latter year, as to give us ground to expect, that in only eleven years after its renewal in 1688, the whole balance against us, would not only be intirely done away, but that a balance should rise in our favour of upwards of a million; and yet Davenant tells us, that in the year 1699, the general rental of the lands of England, which had been computed at only six millions in 1600, was risen to fourteen millions; that their purchase which had been then only twelve years income, and consequently amounted to no more than seventy-two millions, was now eighteen years income, and amounted to two hundred and fifty-two millions. That our exports amounted to 6,788,166l. of which our Woollen Manufactures made three millions; and that our imports
amounted

amounted to no more than 5,640,506l. leaving a clear balance of 1,147,660l. in our favour; which *Wood* in his *Survey of Trade*, says, had increased in the years 1713 and 1714, to 2,103,148l. upon a medium of those two years.

I am not inclined, nor do I see any reason to doubt the truth of these accounts; but as manufactures do not start up like mushrooms, nor trade and shipping increase like Jonah's Gourd, it appears to me, that these inferences may be fairly drawn from them, viz: That the Trade, Manufactures, and Navigation of England were continually increasing, from the accession of Elizabeth to the Treaty of Utrecht, notwithstanding the checks given them by foreign and civil wars; and that in no one period of that time, had the balance of trade, distinctly considered, been against this Country: That the injurious effects of an open trade with France have been most extravagantly exaggerated; and that, although the balance of our foreign trade increased most rapidly and considerably, after the importation of French

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merchandize was prohibited in 1677; much of the excess arose from other causes, and is not to be attributed to that prohibition: And that it also appears from this deduction, that there is not any thing in the merchandize or manufactures of France, more particularly noxious to this Country, than in the like merchandize and manufactures of other Nations: Nor that the skill and diligence of French manufacturers are so unconquerable as to leave no hope for Englishmen to equal them in any of their fabrics; and consequently, that there is no impossibility of framing a Treaty of Commerce with France beneficial to this Country.

Under these circumstances, the Utrecht Commercial Treaty presents itself; and it is much to our purpose to examine the grounds of its rejection.

The *British Merchant* so often quoted, calculates, that in consequence of the stipulations of that Treaty, our imports from France would annually have amounted to 1,712,559l. and that our exports thither, would

would not have exceeded 270,181l.; therefore, that a ballance of near a million and a half would have every year accrued against us.

Whatever credit this calculation is intitled to, still it ought to be considered, that in so far as the articles to be imported from France would not have interfered with our own manufactures, or were similar to what we took from other nations; the injury of receiving them from France, rather than from other nations, does not arise from the imported articles themselves; but must be transferred to the superior advantages allowed us in our exports to other nations, beyond what France was to have allowed us. For instance: As we have no Wines of our own growth, it could be of no material importance to the Nation's Commerce, whither we took our supplies from Portugal or France; providing we found the same demand for, and facility in, disposing of our manufactures and merchandize in France that we did in Portugal. This, however, would not have been the case with any of

our fabrics under the stipulations of the Utrecht Treaty, and our Woollens were wholly excluded.

But besides the great defect of the Treaty, in not providing an advantageous market for British manufactures and merchandize in France ; the permitting the importation of French manufactures into Great Britain, subject only to the general tonnage and poundage duties, would probably have been the ruin of our manufactures of Silk, Linnen, Iron, Paper and Glafs ; which were then in an infant state, and by no means able to contend with those of France, which had attained a high degree of perfection ; and therefore on both these accounts, the Treaty must have been highly pernicious in its operation, and every British subject has reason to rejoice that it never had effect ; and more especially, as we may all have the great and solid satisfaction to perceive with our own eyes, that the trade and manufactures, and shipping of this country have increased in a most astonishing degree, since the accession of the Hanover family in 1714 :
And,

And, that notwithstanding our enormous expenditures in the three last wars, our lands have been improved, our towns enlarged, and embellished, and whatever denotes wealth and prosperity has flourished beyond all example.

I shall not go about to prove what is fo evident to the observation of all men; but I shall add for the comfort, as well as information of my countrymen, a copy of the latest estimate I have seen of the present value of the several manufactures of Great-Britain.

			£.
The Woollen,	—		16,800,000
Leather,	—	—	10,500,000
Flax,	—	—	1,750,000
Hemp,	—	—	890,000
Glass,	—	—	630,000
Paper,	—	—	780,000
Porcelain,	—	—	1,000,000
Silk,	—	—	3,350,000
Cotton,	—	—	960,000
			<hr/>
Carried over	—		36,660,000
			Brought

		£.
Brought over,	—	36,660,000
Lead,	—	1,650,000
Tin,	—	1,000,000
Iron,	—	8,700,000
Steel and Plating,	—	3,400,000
Total		<hr/> 51,410,000 <hr/>

All which fabrics are supposed to give employment to upwards of five millions of people.

When things have succeeded so well with us, and our trade and manufactures have increased so prodigiously, it must be granted, that the utmost caution ought to be used in making alterations in our commercial system; and that no experiment ought to be tried, whatever probability there may be of its success, if its failure may be prejudicial to our trade; unless we are urged to it, by motives of a superior nature, to that of preserving the profits of our Commerce undiminished. *Such motives* however, I do conceive there may be, and now exist,

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exist, and I shall venture to assign some which appear to me, a private individual, but a sincere well-wisher to my country; so extremely powerful, as to render the experiment of a Commercial Treaty with France, not only prudent, but essentially necessary to the welfare and happiness of Great Britain : As I deem it a measure likely to remove the ancient national prejudices, which have so often occasioned hostilities between the two nations ; and to promote the establishment of mutual confidence and friendship, which I conceive is, in the present situation of Europe, and of this Country, our soundest policy and truest wisdom.

This declaration will I know revolt many an honest Englishman, who has all his life considered France as the natural enemy of his country ; and many others who esteem themselves of a much higher order of politicians, will censure it as imprudent, tending to alarm the nation with a revival of the odious Stuart policy ; and I shall probably be also charged by others with being a pensioner of France, and hired
to

to mislead my countrymen ; but as I have already avowed my utter ignorance of the Minister's views and purposes in making the Treaty, I shall as a British subject claim the privilege of shewing *my own opinion*, as it can do no harm.

Those who are so fond of giving Great Britain a *natural enemy* in the House of Bourbon, ought, one would think, to find her some *natural friends* among the other powers of Europe ; and it is much to be regretted, that none thought fit to discover themselves when she stood so much in need of them in the course of the last war : Where was the *grateful* House of Austria ? Our *firm Allies* the Dutch ? And the *most faithful* King of Portugal in the hour of our distress ? The truth is, we have been too long the dupes of our own prejudices, and of the artifices of such as called themselves our friends, and it is high time we recovered our senses.

If France has been hostile to us in her negotiations since the peace of Utrecht, it
was

was we who made her so, by treating her as our enemy: When we were allying with Austria against her, and subsidizing every little Prince in Germany, to hold troops in readiness to attack her; was she to blame for stirring us up enemies in Asia and America, or finding us work at home? What, but the most determined prejudices, could have hurried us into the war of 1739 with Spain, which was the forerunner of the French war in 1744: at the merchant's cry of *no search* of their illicit traders, and the patriot's yell for the loss of Jenkins's ears which were never taken from him? And who will now be hardy enough to assert, that it was the interest of Great Britain, to make settlements beyond the Allegany Mountains in America; or, that we had any business to interrupt the French in establishing a communication by water between their provinces of Canada and Louisiana? Yet, what other grounds were there, for the war of 1755?

The spirit of independence, (I speak from knowledge) had then spread far and
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wide, though secretly, and taken deep root in our colonies; but the leaders of the intended revolt were well aware, that should the French confine the British Settlements to where the interest of England required they should be limited, the east-side of the Allegany Mountains, their favourite project could never be brought to bear.—All their arts were therefore put in practice to engage the English traders and manufacturers, to second their representations of the necessity of extirpating the French from the continent of America; and they but too well succeeded, for the general prejudice against France, and the jealousy of her hostile intentions towards this country, pre-disposed the multitude to give credit to every fiction of the Americans, and prevented them from entertaining the least suspicion of the secret designs of their insidious brethren.

Those two wars may therefore be fairly attributed to the absurd prejudice of the people of England, in considering France as the natural enemy of this country; and as
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those two wars cost Great Britain about a hundred millions, and many thousand people, it is no improper demand upon the advocates for eternal hostility with France, to shew the advantages the nation obtained by those wars in compensation for the heavy loss they brought upon it: Until this estimate appears, I shall adopt the witty reasoning of the Duc de Mirepoix, then ambassador from France, against the commencement of the war of 1755; " that it " was a great pity to cut off so many heads " for the sake of a few hats."

France certainly entered into the last war without the shadow of justice on her side; but while we admire and applaud the wisdom of our Elizabeth, in abetting the Dutch in their revolt from Spain, because that Power was deemed then her natural enemy; ought we not to allow it equally wise in France, to avail herself of a like opportunity to weaken Great Britain, who had held herself out to her in the same character? I mean not to palliate, much less to justify the breach of faith and unprovoked

ed hostility in either instance; but I wish my countrymen to reflect, that however France may merit the epithet of *faithless*, plain honest John Bull is not perfectly immaculate.

How the King of Spain was brought to join in the last war, can be best accounted for by those who told Count Almadovar, that orders were given by our King to intercept the Spanish Flota on its way to Cadiz; which that Minister was weak enough not only to believe, but to assure his Court of, before he gave Lord Weymouth an opportunity of undeceiving him; which his Lordship did so effectually, that the Count made all possible haste to contradict his former intelligence; but alas, his second messenger arrived too late: The French party had worked so effectually upon the King with the lye, as to overcome his aversion to the war; and the orders for commencing hostilities were dispatched, before the ministerial contradiction could be brought to detect the patriotic falsehood; I know there are other causes assigned for the

the Spanish King's entering into the war; and I intend, not by this story, to exonerate any man from his due share of culpability, who *knows himself* to have been an accessory in the fatal business.

We have been accustomed to value the friendship of foreign nations by the profits of our trade with them, and we act wisely in so doing; but why should we not open another account with them, and reckon our loss by their enmity also? The House of Bourbon is the only power in Europe that can greatly annoy us, and it is fortunate for us, that we can do them more mischief than they have to apprehend from any probable combination of other nations, without our aid. It should seem therefore the interest of both kingdoms, to keep on civil terms at least with each other; but if we go a step further, and consider them as Allies, how does the importance of every other European power shrink before them? The unstable Joseph, always the dupe of his own chicanery; and the wily Catharine ever meditating to deceive, would soon learn

learn the wisdom of the old adage, that honesty is the best policy in all their dealings with us.—The apprehension of such an alliance has often disquieted those sovereigns, and I trust they will hereafter find more cause of uneasiness from it.

If France and Great Britain should mutually adopt the policy of living in friendship with each other, the jealousy of the former would not be excited by malicious representations of the extensive commerce and increasing wealth of Great Britain; and Great Britain need no longer take alarm at insinuations of the increasing influence, and aggrandizement of the House of Bourbon; so that the Ministers of other powers might employ themselves more usefully at both courts, than by seeking food for the jealousy of each, and endeavouring to keep alive the embers of enmity between them; which has hitherto been their constant practice, and chief business.

I flatter myself, that what I have said, is sufficient to shew the propriety of making
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the experiment of a Commercial Treaty with France: I could add other reasons equally cogent, in favour of a good agreement between the two nations, drawn from a view of the trade and policy of both countries; as I have no doubt it could be made appear, that the prosperity of both is by no means incompatible, and that their truest political interests do not clash; but this would lead me into too wide a field of discussion, and therefore I shall leave those topics for the display of the commercial and political abilities of the eloquent Members of both Houses of Parliament; and proceed to the second question I propounded, and the examination of the late Treaty itself.

Whatever may have been Mr. Pitt's motives for opening the Treaty, it must readily be allowed by all who are acquainted with the talents and information of Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Eden, that he could not have committed the negociation to abler hands; nor could *they* have given a higher proof of their wisdom and discretion,

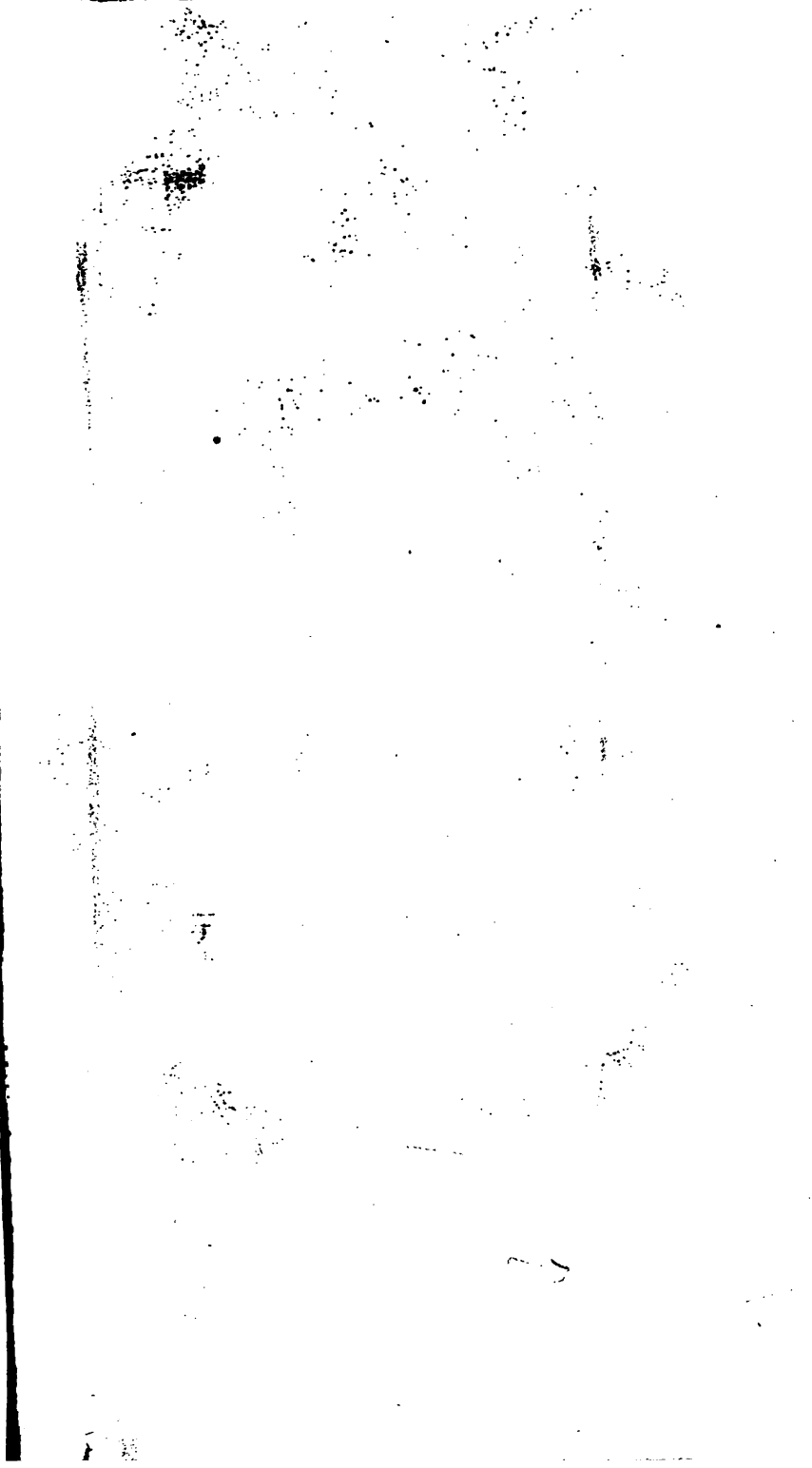
tion, than by the cautious measure of limiting the duration of the Treaty to the short term of twelve years; thereby guarding against the possibility of the mischievous consequences, of either suffering materially in some of our manufactures, through an unforeseen advantage obtained by France; or of giving her offence by seeking means to counteract it when discovered: nor is the measure less to be commended, upon the supposition of unforeseen advantages arising on our side. For, the long continuance of such advantages, could not fail to give dissatisfaction to the French Court and People; and thereby disturb, or at least lessen that mutual confidence and friendship, which it is above all things our interest to establish.

That the circumstances of Great Britain are now very different in respect to the state of her manufactures, from what they were in the year 1713, will readily be perceived, by comparing the estimate I have given of the articles expected to be imported from France, had the Utrecht Treaty of
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Commerce been ratified, with the late estimate of the value of our several manufactures; for it must appear from thence, that our manufactures of Linen, Hemp, Iron, Paper and Glass, have now reached such full perfection, as to be in no danger of being overpowered, or underfold by French fabrics of the same denomination, subject to a duty of 12 per cent. upon their importation into Great Britain. Even our Silk manufactures, I doubt not, might risk the competition with the like advantage as is given to the Leather; but as France has that material within herself, and England must import it, there was much prudence in excluding it entirely from the Tariff; for to whatever height of excellence any nation may bring her manufacture of a foreign material, it will be found in the course of things, that the country which possesses the material within herself, will one day rival her in it, if the government of the latter be not greatly defective. Nor will I allow the Wool of Spain to be an instance to the contrary, for that Country was in possession of the Woollen Manu-
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factory

persons the most eminent and skillful in the several manufactures, the result of their investigation must be of more authority than that of any individual. I shall therefore commit to them the examination of each particular, and only express my hope, That whatever may be their report, they will confine their publications to their *resolutions* only, without assigning their reasons, for as the principle of the Treaty is a fair one, there is no need to emblazon, or detract from, the advantages which either party may derive from superior exertions of skill or industry; nor are the benefits of local situation, cheapness of materials or of living, necessary to be displayed for the public information on this occasion.

F. I. N. I. S.





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